

FLAT-TAILED HORNED LIZARD
(*Phrynosoma mcallii*)

STATUS: None, proposed rule (68 FR 331, January 3, 2003).

SPECIES DESCRIPTION: The flat-tailed horned lizard has the typical flattened body shape of horned lizards. It is distinguished from other species in its genus by its dark vertebral stripe, lack of external ear openings, long, broad and flattened tail, and comparatively long spines on the head. In addition, the species has two rows of fringed scales on each side of the body. The species ranges in color from pale gray to light rust brown dorsally, and white or cream (unspotted) ventrally with a prominent umbilical scar. Maximum adult body length (excluding the tail) is approximately 3.2 inches (84 millimeters).

HABITAT: Occurs entirely within the Lower Colorado River Valley Subdivision of Sonoran Desert Scrub. This is the largest and most arid subdivision of the Sonoran Desert. The lizard occurs at elevations of 0 - 1,606 feet (0-520 meters), but in Arizona occurs below 500 feet (152 meters). The species is most often associated with the creosote-white bursage series of the desert scrub, and in Arizona is often abundant in sandy flats where galleta grass is common. In Arizona and much of its range in California, the flat-tailed horned lizard habitat is associated with fine silica sands deposited by the Colorado River.

RANGE: Historical: The historic range of the flat-tailed horned lizard included many areas in Arizona, California, and Baja California that have been developed for urban or agricultural purposes. The lizard is now absent from most of the Coachella Valley, portions of the Borrego Valley, and urban and agricultural areas of the Imperial Valley, California. Historically, the species was found throughout the Yuma area. Habitat in Sonora is largely intact.

Current: The flat-tailed horned lizard is found in the extreme southwestern corner of Arizona, southeastern California, and adjoining portions of Sonora and Baja California, Mexico. In Arizona, the species is found in the Yuma Desert of southwestern Yuma County, south of the Gila River and west of the Gila, Tinaja Altas, and Butler mountains. The species is absent from Yuma, Arizona and adjacent agriculture lands, and from most of the developed areas of the Mexicali Valley in Baja California. In California, the species is found in portions of eastern San Diego County, central Riverside County, and Imperial County.

REASONS FOR DECLINE/VULNERABILITY: Vulnerable due to habitat loss and degradation, and direct mortality due to vehicular use on and off-road.

LAND MANAGEMENT/OWNERSHIP: Lands within the range of the flat-tailed horned lizard in Arizona include Federal lands administered by the Marine Corps Air Station at Yuma, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Bureau of Reclamation; State of Arizona lands; and private lands.

NOTES: On January 3, 2003, the USFWS withdrew the proposed rule to list the FTHL as a threatened species. We determined that listing was not warranted because threats to the species as identified in the proposed rule were not as significant as earlier believed, and current available data did not indicate that the threats to the species and its habitat were likely to endanger the species throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

Included on the State of Arizona's draft list of Species of Special Concern.

Collection of flat-tailed horned lizards is prohibited in both Arizona and California, except by special permit.

Listed as a threatened species by the Mexican Government.